NDIS Guide to Starshell Ability

Welcome to *Starshell Ability* - this guide will provide a brief introduction to the *Starshell Ability* program and provide handy information on how you can help keep you vulnerable youths/adults safe online.

These days, it's important to understand the risks people face in the cyber world and the pros and cons of social media use so we can help ensure their online interactions are safe and positive. As parents/carers, we understand that the world is a lot different from when we were at school. One of the most profound differences is the rapid explosion in tech – and all the good and not-so-good that comes with that.

Adults tend to be well aware of some of the online dangers we face ourselves: viruses, identity theft, online scams, malware, cyberbullying, etc. But in many ways, digital connectivity is even more dangerous for our kids and vulnerable adults, who may not fully appreciate the risks and may place an even greater importance on online social acceptance.

According to Chad A Rose, Nicholas - A Gage Exceptional Children 83 (3), 298-314, 2017

Students with disabilities are disproportionately involved within the bullying dynamic. Few studies have investigated the bullying involvement of youth with disabilities over time. The current study evaluated the victimization and perpetration rates of 6,531 students in Grades 3 through 12, including 16% with disabilities, over the course of 3 years. Results revealed that students with disabilities experienced greater rates of victimization and engaged in higher levels of perpetration than their peers without disabilities over time. In addition, the discrepancy in victimization and perpetration rates between youth with and without disabilities remained consistent longitudinally. Results from this study support the recommendation that students with disabilities should receive direct instruction in social and communication skills to buffer these adverse experiences.

Pros and cons of the digital era:

Pros:

- ***Keeping in touch*** **–** It's easier than ever to communicate with family and friends, no matter where they are
- ***Community engagement*** – The Internet increases opportunities to keep track of what's happening in our communities (local and global) and take an active part
- ***Collaboration*** **–** Tech simplifies the exchange of ideas through a number of mediums: blogs, podcasts, videos and more
- ***Access to education*** **–** The online world provides a comprehensive and growing source of educational resources: research, tutors, info-hubs, courses, projects, etc.

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Cons:

- ***Cyberbullying*** – This is the most frequent online risk for young people
- ***Online harassment*** – When we're 'plugged-in' 24/7, it's harder to avoid abuse
- ***Sexting/grooming*** – Inappropriate/dangerous/predatory behaviours
- ***Anxiety/depression/self-harm*** – Social media can create unrealistic expectations in young people; negative interactions can impact self-esteem
- ***Exposure to inappropriate content*** - A lot of online material isn't suitable for reading or viewing by children or teens
- ***Privacy concerns/compromised reputation*** – The exposure of private/intimate personal details can have serious implications
- ***Sleep deprivation*** – How is technology affecting your child's sleep habits?

What is Starshell Ability?

Starshell Ability is an innovative, educational, safeguarding program that protects young people/Vulnerable adults by providing them with the tools to engage with social media in a safe and positive way. They learn to take responsibility for their own actions on social media, making them responsible digital citizens.

Starshell Ability detects and addresses social issues such as:

- Cyberbullying
- Disability Related abuse
- Cyberstalking
- Sexting
- Self-harm
- Sleep deprivation
- Discrimination - racial, homophobic, etc.
- Anti-social behaviour – drugs, alcohol, weapons
- Stress and anxiety - domestic and school pressures

The trauma that occurs as a consequence of negative social media can be felt immediately at school and also at home. *Starshell Ability* can detect and provide real-time education on the damaging effects of negative behaviours and alert parents/carers to potential dangers. It's non-invasive (it only analyses public information) and creates a safer online community by opening channels of communication between young people, parents and teachers. Here's how it works:

- Analyses incoming/outgoing messages
- Identifies issues
- Provides a notification via SMS/email
- Sends online-based real-time education
- Provides direction to relevant help services
- Provides a self-management program for the student - *without parents taking control, like other products on the market*

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- Monitors incoming and outgoing messages on Instagram and Twitter
- Provides real-time notifications to parents and youth
- It's a self-learning tool that can be personalised to the users' needs
- It's cloud-based so it doesn't have to be downloaded to a device
- It doesn't ask for social media passwords for parents
- It operates across any device the user uses to access social media
- It links students and parents to educational content that promotes safe and ethical use of social media and encourages healthy online interactions

As amazing as this program is, it wouldn't have been possible without the research and input from teachers, parents. NDIS providers and - most importantly – youths. *Starshell Ability* is *not* about punishment - our program provides guidance to educate students/vulnerable adults in the appropriate use of digital media and how to become good digital citizens.

Starshell Ability comes pre-loaded with a number of filter rules that support youths and adults with a disability, to make it quick and easy for the parent/carers to set up. Filters include: Offensive words, Mood recognition, Skin pixel, Images, Individual.

Starshell Ability handy features:

- *Notifications -* The administrator/parent can choose to receive a notification when social media updates are flagged so they can review it instantly. Users can be sent notifications when their updates are flagged; a link to the fact sheets can be included as an ongoing educational tool to help them understand appropriate social media usage.
- *Reporting –* *Starshell Ability* generates activity reports to see how many social media updates each youth has had flagged and uses this to determine what social media mentoring or additional filter rules might be put in place. Reports are also generated for providers/care giver to show the type and volume of social media issues and to structure adequate education.
- *Security -* The *Starshell Ability* platform is secure and requires authorisation from each user to establish access to their social media accounts. Account details are encrypted using industry-standard technologies so that other users (and even staff) cannot gain access to the accounts.
- *Flexibility -* The dashboard allows the administrator to easily add or delete user's social media accounts as requirements change and to alter all settings, features and filter rules at any time.

Ambassadors and Rewards - The *Starshell Ability* ambassador program is a model that works with trusted, credible sports and celebrity personalities to promote and give greater visibility to our platform. Our ambassadors work with schools to provide education programs and encourage youths/adults to be safe digital citizens, providing rewards and prizes for participants who are recognised for positive initiatives.

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Community - Our global community allows *Starshell Ability* to visit schools and regional communities across the US, Australia, UK, Canada, Asia and elsewhere to raise awareness on cyber safety and help prevent online bullying. We recognise that each family and school is unique, so we will work collaboratively to develop a program that meets your specific needs.

Cost

This is a unique programme the we see as essential for all those with a disability. The full subscription programme is $180 AUD/year. This can be part of you NDIS pre-plan. We encourage everyone to sign up for the free version, this gives you the education updates. As soon as your funding is available you can then get fully protected by getting on board.

You pre-plan manager can help guide you in this process or you can send a contact request to join.

Don't let another day go by without protecting the ones you care about from the "Dangers on Social Media"

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